

Former Guantanamo Detainees who have returned to the fight:

Our reports indicate that at least 30 former GTMO detainees have taken part in anti-coalition militant activities after leaving U.S. detention. Some have subsequently been killed in combat in Afghanistan.

These former detainees successfully lied to US officials, sometimes for over three years. Many detainees later identified as having returned to fight against the U.S. with terrorists falsely claimed to be farmers, truck drivers, cooks, small-scale merchants, or low-level combatants.

Other common cover stories include going to Afghanistan to buy medicines, to teach the Koran, or to find a wife. Many of these stories appear so often, and are subsequently proven false that we can only conclude they are part of their terrorist training.

Although the US government does not generally track ex-GTMO detainees after repatriation or resettlement, we are aware of dozens of cases where they have returned to militant activities, participated in anti-US propaganda or other activities through intelligence gathering and media reports. (Examples: Mehsud suicide bombing in Pakistan; Tipton Three and the Road to Guantanamo; Uighurs in Albania)

The following seven former detainees are a few examples of the 30; each returned to combat against the US and its allies after being released from Guantanamo.

Mohamed Yusif Yaqub AKA Mullah Shazada:

After his release from GTMO on May 8, 2003, Shazada assumed control of Taliban operations in Southern Afghanistan. In this role, his activities reportedly included the organization and execution of a jailbreak in Kandahar, and a nearly successful capture of the border town of Spin Boldak. Shazada was killed on May 7, 2004 while fighting against US forces. At the time of his release, the US had no indication that he was a member of any terrorist organization or posed a risk to US or allied interests.

Abdullah Mehsud:

Mehsud was captured in northern Afghanistan in late 2001 and held until March of 2004. After his release he went back to the fight, becoming a militant leader within the Mehsud tribe in southern Waziristan. We have since discovered that he had been associated with the Taliban since his teen years and has been described as an al Qaida-linked facilitator. In mid-October 2004, Mehsud directed the kidnapping of two Chinese engineers in Pakistan. During rescue operations by Pakistani forces, a kidnapper shot one of the hostages. Five of the kidnappers were killed. Mehsud was not among them. In July 2007, Mehsud carried out a suicide bombing as Pakistani Police closed in on his position. Over 1,000 people are reported to have attended his funeral services.

Maulavi Abdul Ghaffar:

After being captured in early 2002 and held at GTMO for eight months, Ghaffar reportedly became the Taliban's regional commander in Uruzgan and Helmand provinces, carrying out attacks on US and Afghan forces. On September 25, 2004, while planning an attack against Afghan police, Ghaffar and two of his men were killed in a raid by Afghan security forces.

Mohammed Ismail:

Ismail was released from GTMO in 2004. During a press interview after his release, he described the Americans saying, "they gave me a good time in Cuba. They were very nice to me, giving me English lessons." He concluded his interview saying he would have to find work once he finished visiting all his relatives. He was recaptured four months later in May 2004, participating in an attack on US forces near Kandahar. At the time of his recapture, Ismail carried a letter confirming his status as a Taliban member in good standing.

Abdul Rahman Noor:

Noor was released in July of 2003, and has since participated in fighting against US forces near Kandahar. After his release, Noor was identified as the person in an October 7, 2001, video interview with al-Jazeera TV network, wherein he is identified as the "deputy defense minister of the Taliban." In this interview, he described the defensive position of the mujahideen and claimed they had recently downed an airplane.

Mohammed Nayim Farouq:

After his release from US custody in July 2003, Farouq quickly renewed his association with Taliban and al-Qaida members and has since become re-involved in anti-Coalition militant activity.

Ruslan Odizhev:

Killed by Russian forces June 2007, shot along with another man in Nalchik, the capital of the tiny North Caucasus republic of Kabardino-Balkaria. Odizhev, born in 1973, was included in a report earlier this year by the New York-based Human Rights Watch on the alleged abuse in Russia of seven former inmates of the Guantanamo Bay prison after Washington handed them back to Moscow in 2004.

As the facts surrounding the ex-GTMO detainees indicate, there is an implied future risk to US and allied interests with every detainee who is released or transferred.